

Washington, DC - Following the first anniversary of the tragic and untimely death of Coach Ed Thomas, Congressman Bruce Braley (D-Iowa) introduced legislation today to help ensure the safety of families and communities across the United States. The Ed Thomas Act clarifies existing HIPAA privacy requirements to allow law enforcement agencies and medical providers to communicate more effectively when patients pose an inherent risk to the community.

"Those who knew Ed Thomas knew his compassion, his leadership and his dedication to the entire Parkersburg community," Braley said. "I am proud and humbled to introduce this legislation to the United States Congress. It is my hope that we can continue to honor the memory and legacy of Ed Thomas by passing the Ed Thomas Act, helping to ensure the future safety of schools and communities not just here in Iowa, but across America."

The State of Iowa recently passed legislation that gave Iowa's law enforcement officers the assistance they need to help prevent future tragedies like this one, while also protecting the rights of America's medical patients.

- The Ed Thomas Act clarifies HIPAA to allow hospitals to notify law enforcement officers of a patient's release under the following specific conditions:

- o If an individual is admitted to a medical facility while accompanied by a law enforcement official; and
- o Such official makes a request for patient information in writing; and
- o That request is made at any point between the time the patient is admitted, and 24 hours after discharge:
- o Then the medical facility can provide medical information, including date of discharge, to the law enforcement agency.
- o The HHS Secretary will promulgate regulations to implement this within 90 days of passage.